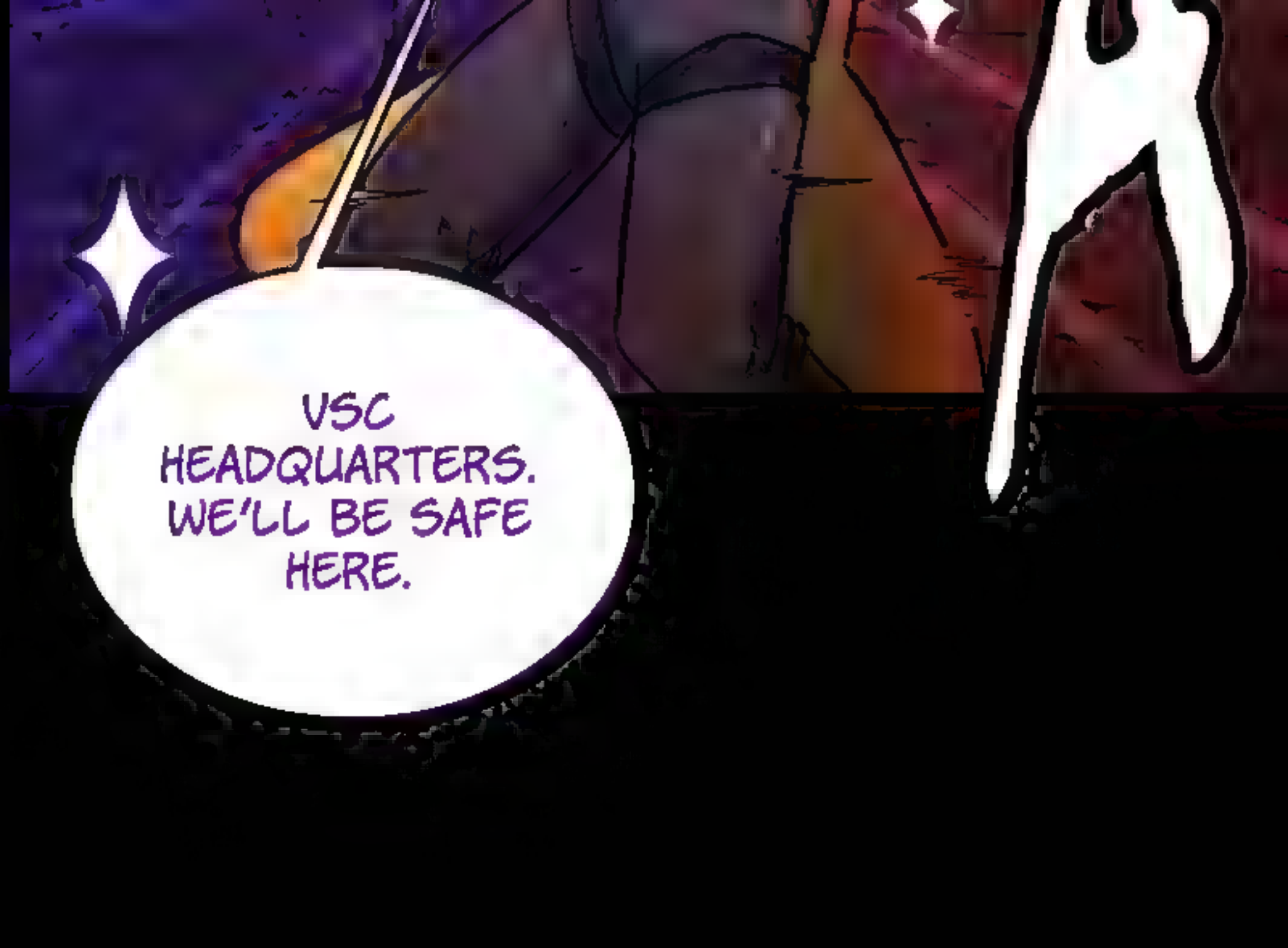
SMC

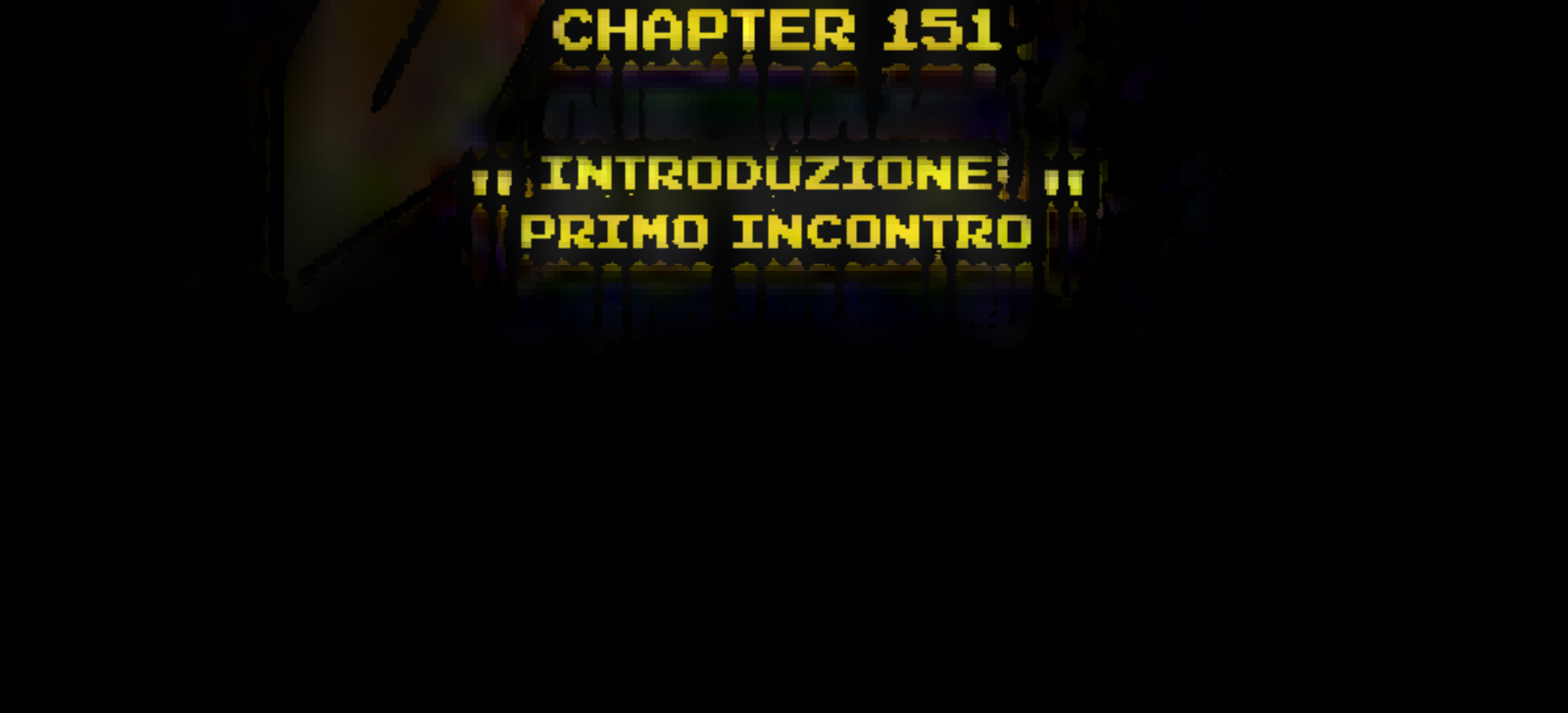
PLINK

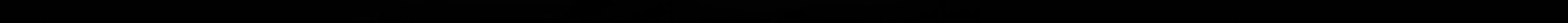
SHH

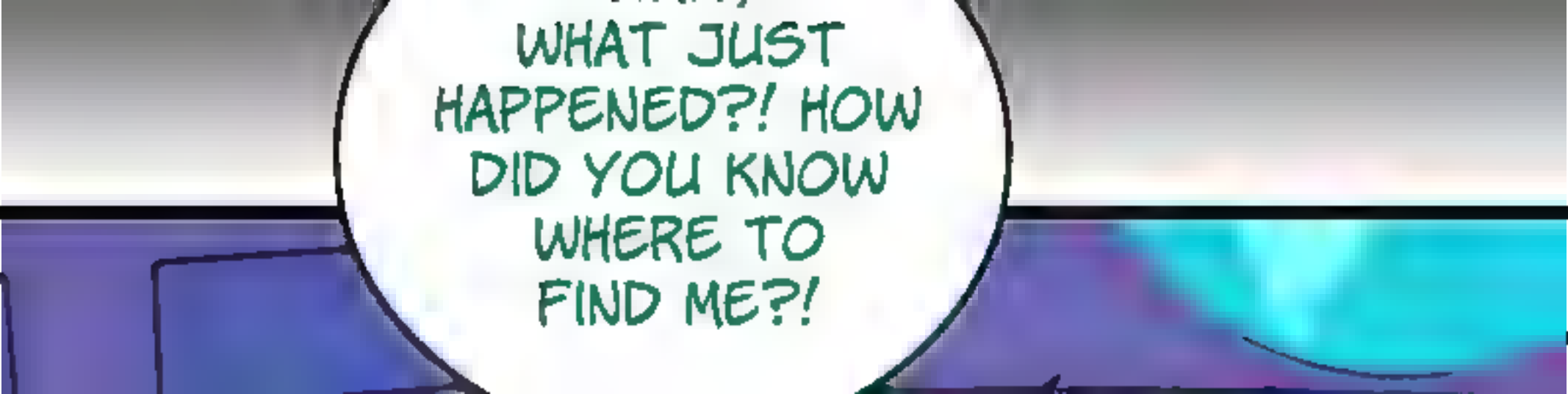
THIS IS IT.

GASP

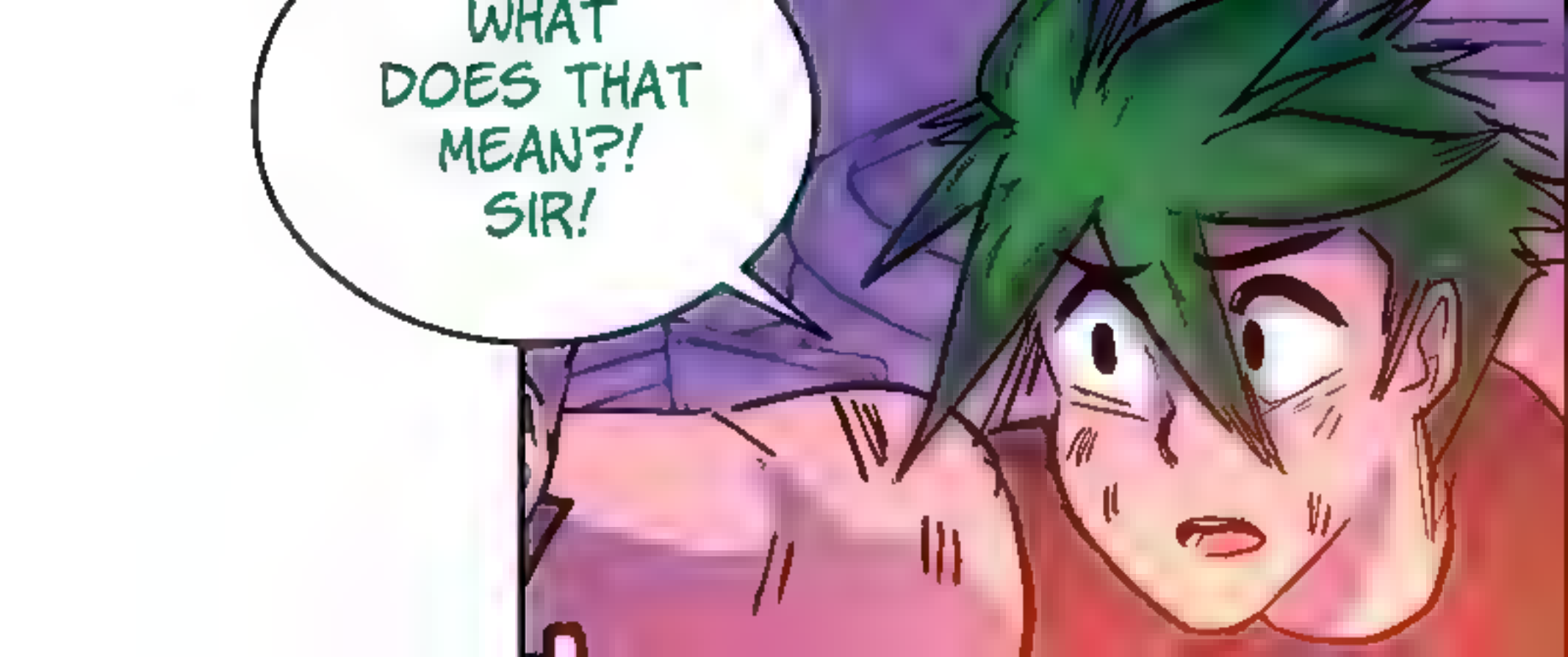

VSC HEADQUARTERS. WE'LL BE SAFE HERE.


CHAPTER 151
" INTRODUZIONE "
PRIMO INCONTRO


WAIT.


WHAT JUST HAPPENED?! HOW DID YOU KNOW WHERE TO FIND ME?!

IRO
IT WASN'T HARD FIGURING OUT WHERE, I JUST WASN'T SURE WHEN YOU'D SHOW UP.


WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?! SIR!

COME ON, WE BETTER TREAT THOSE INJURIES.

SIR,
I'M FINE!

SORRY.
I GUESS I'M JUST USED TO YOU NEEDING A LITTLE EXTRA HELP.

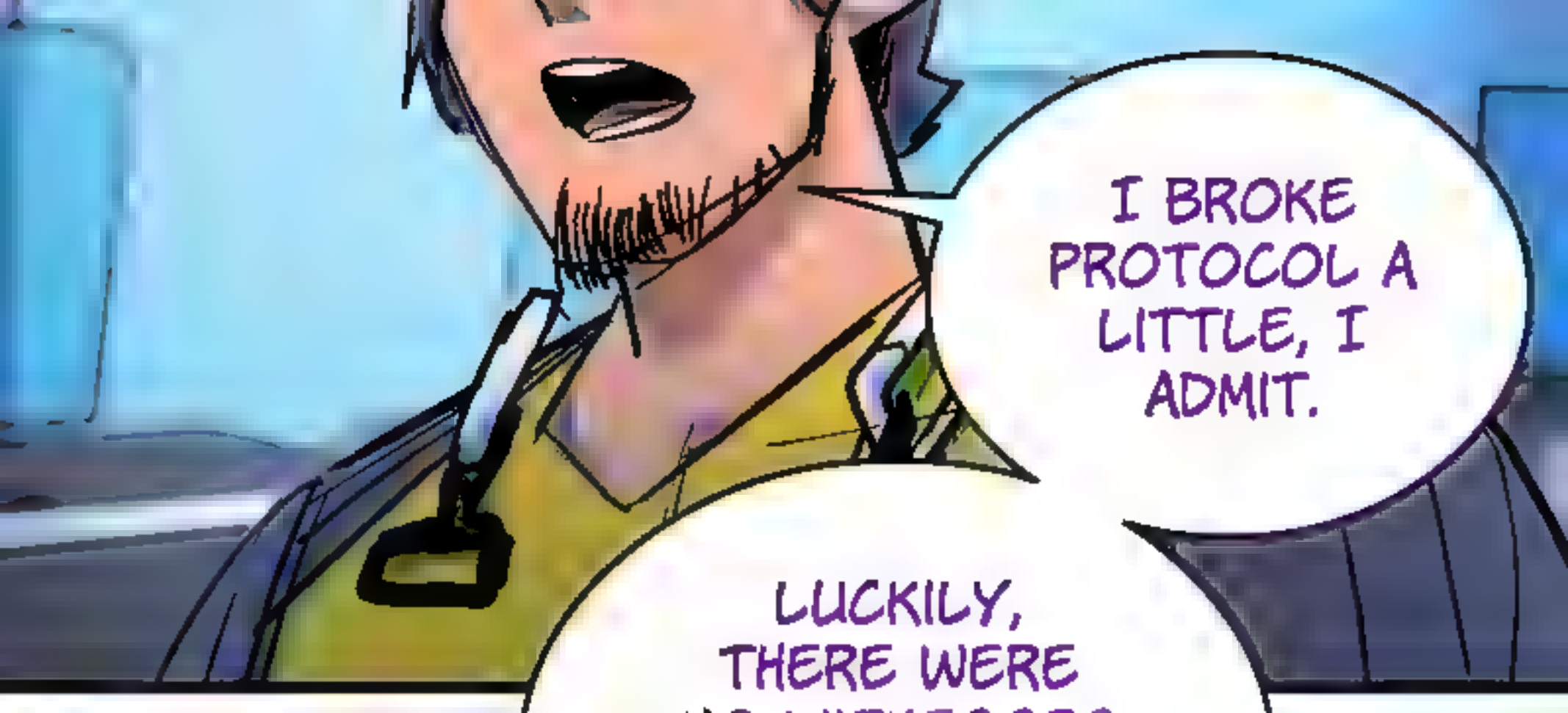
IRON
YEAH, WELL... A LOT HAS CHANGED.

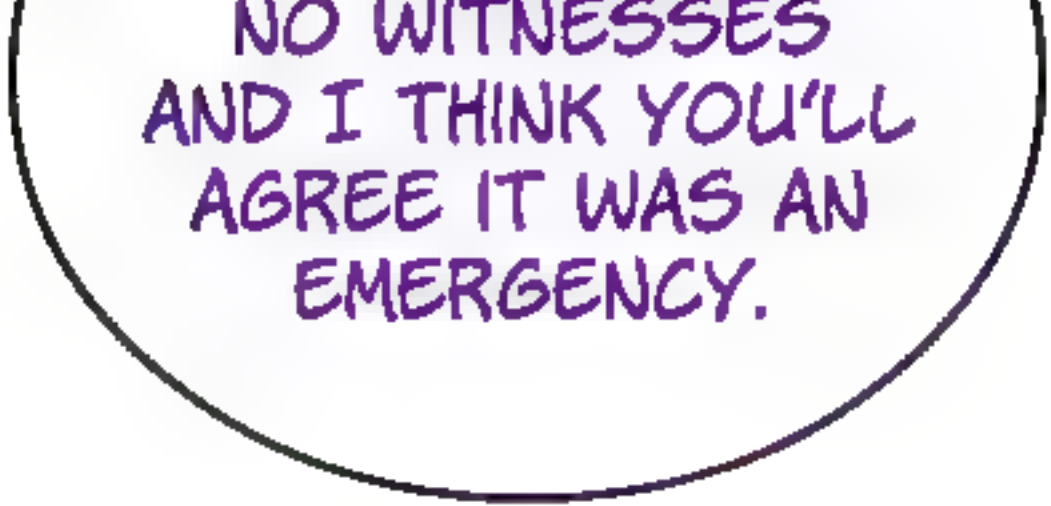
I CAN SEE THAT... YOU'RE NOT EVEN SICK AFTER WE TIME TRAVELLED...

...AND
EVERYTHING
USED TO MAKE
YOU SICK.

TIME

TRAVEL?!


I BROKE PROTOCOL A LITTLE, I ADMIT.
LUCKILY, THERE WERE


NO WITNESSES
AND I THINK YOU'LL
AGREE IT WAS AN
EMERGENCY.

NO
WITNESSES?
IS THE INVENTION

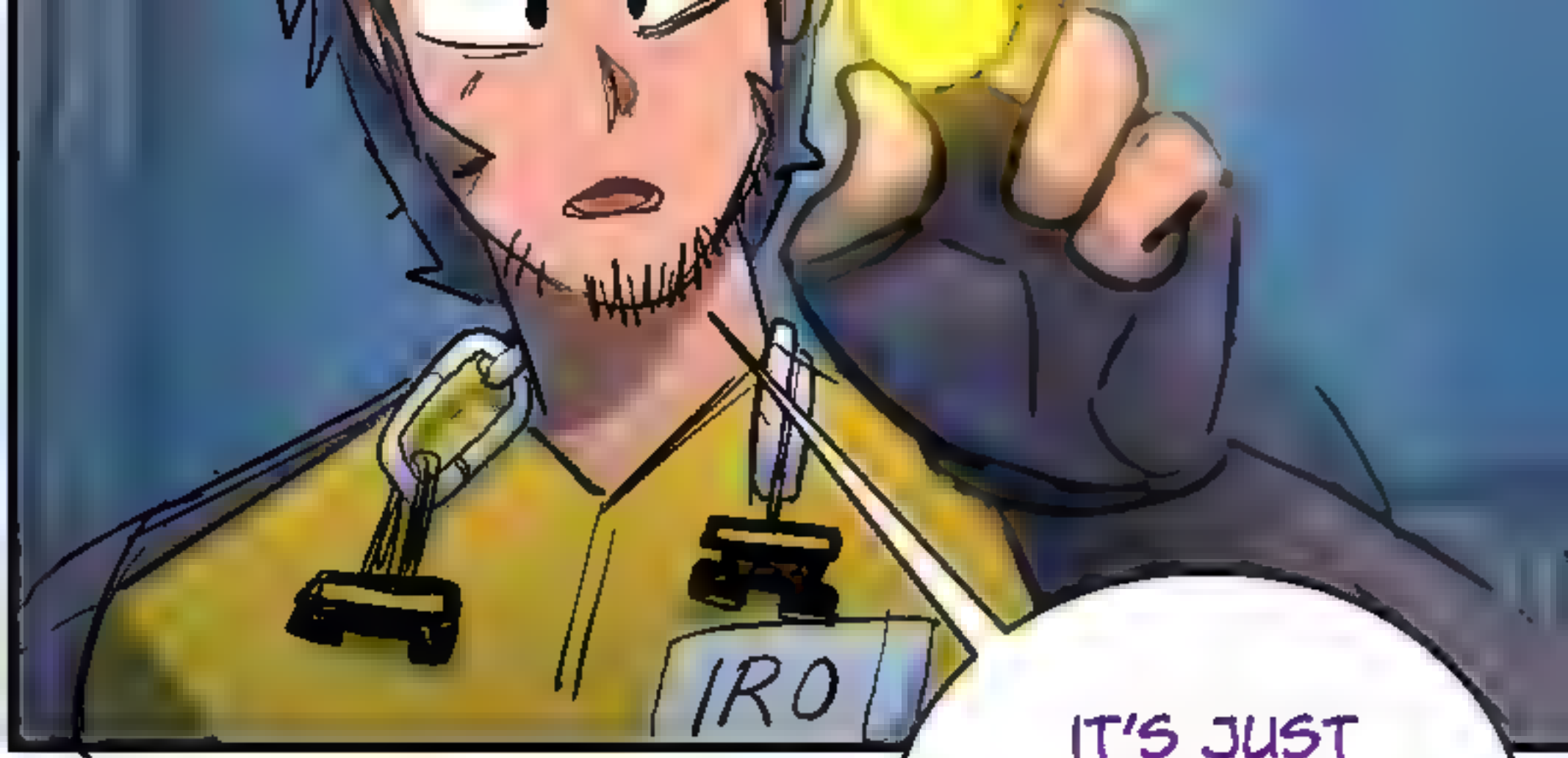
IS THIS INVENTION
OF TIME TRAVEL
BEING KEPT
SECRET?

THEN THAT GOLD PIECE I SAW MUST BE SOME KIND OF

TIME TRAVEL
DEVICE.

IF YOU'RE
REFERRING TO
MY GOLD COIN,

THERE'S NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT IT.

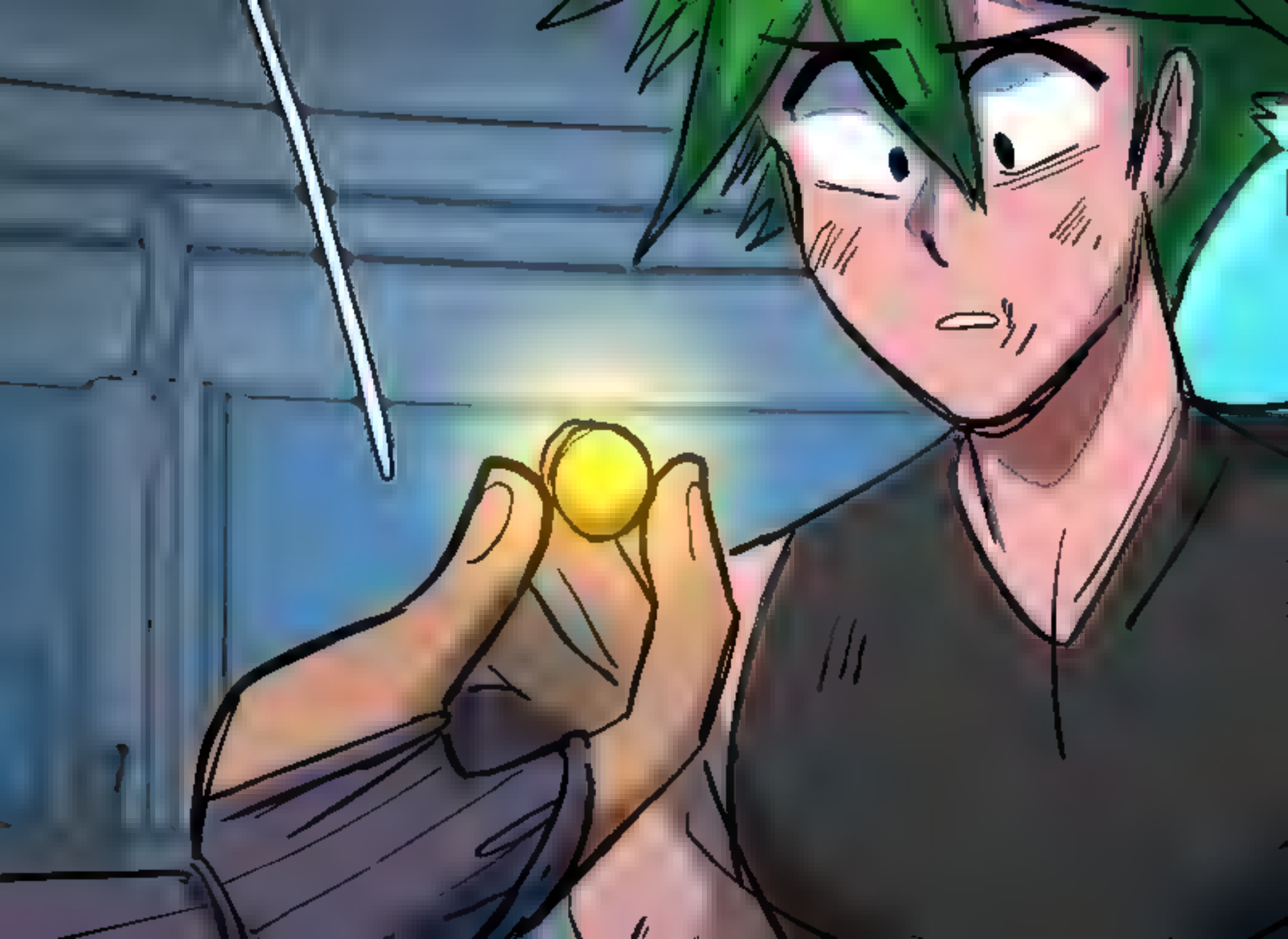


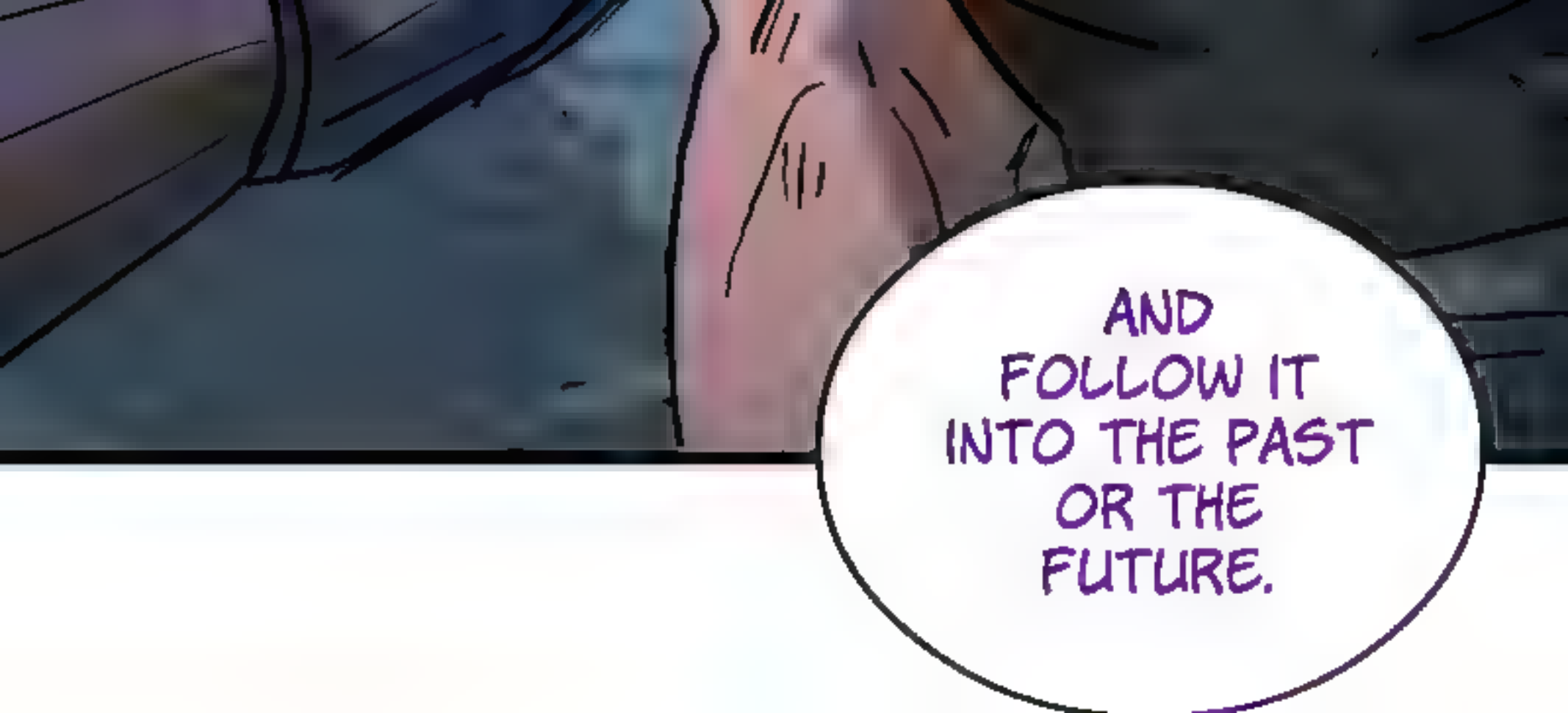
IT'S JUST A REGULAR 3 DIMENSIONAL OBJECT.

BUT
IF YOU COULD
SEE THE COIN IN 4
DIMENSIONS, AKA ITS
PATH THROUGH
TIME....

IT MIGHT LOOK KIND OF LIKE A LONG ROPE.

NOW
IMAGINE YOU
COULD GRAB
THAT ROPE...

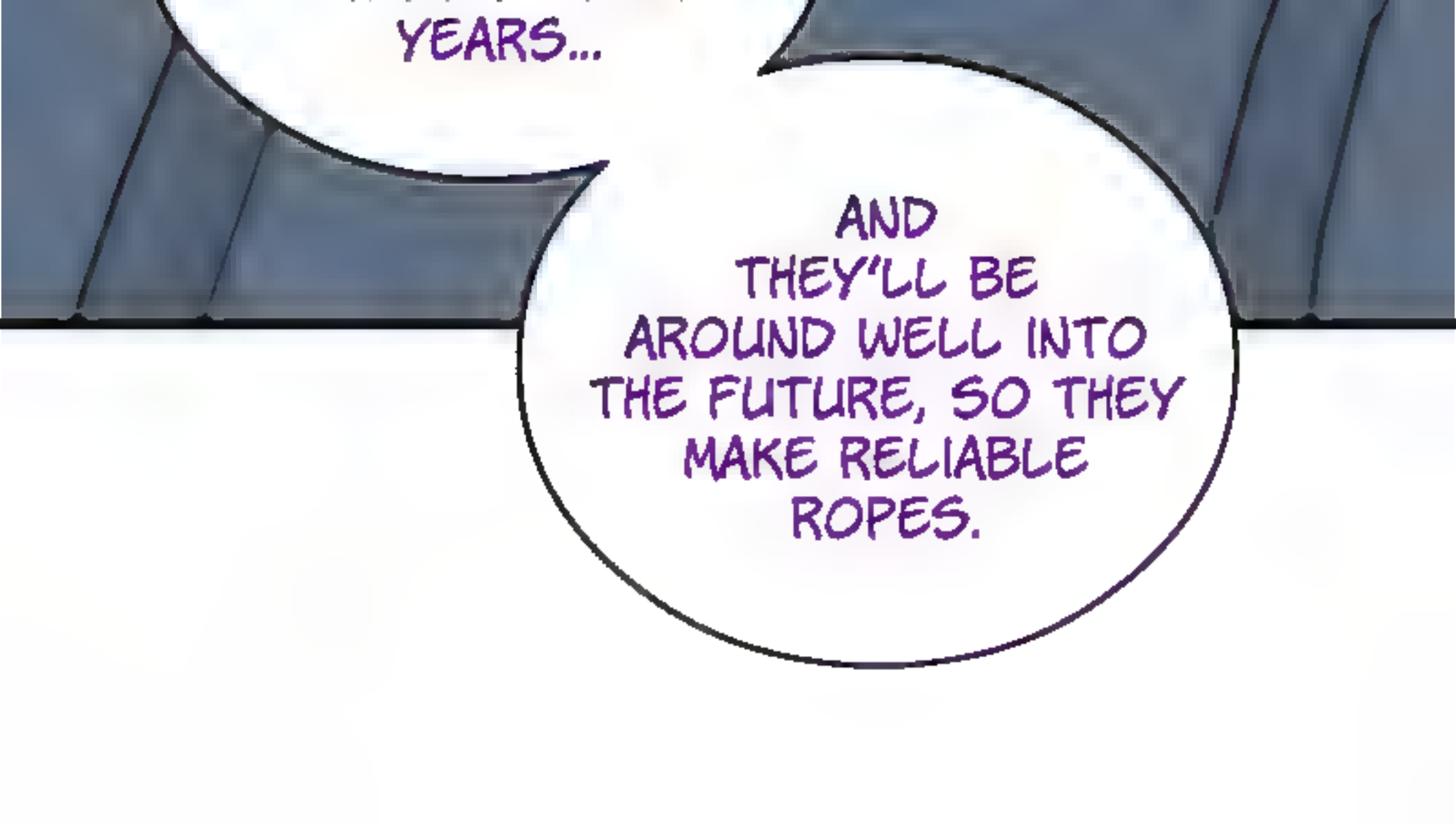



AND
FOLLOW IT
INTO THE PAST
OR THE
FUTURE.

OF
COURSE, IT

WOULD WORK WITH
ALMOST ANY
OBJECT.

BUT HUMANITY HAS BEEN USING GOLD TO MAKE COINS FOR THOUSANDS OF


YEARS...
AND THEY'LL BE AROUND WELL INTO THE FUTURE, SO THEY MAKE RELIABLE ROPES.

...SO
YOU'RE SAYING

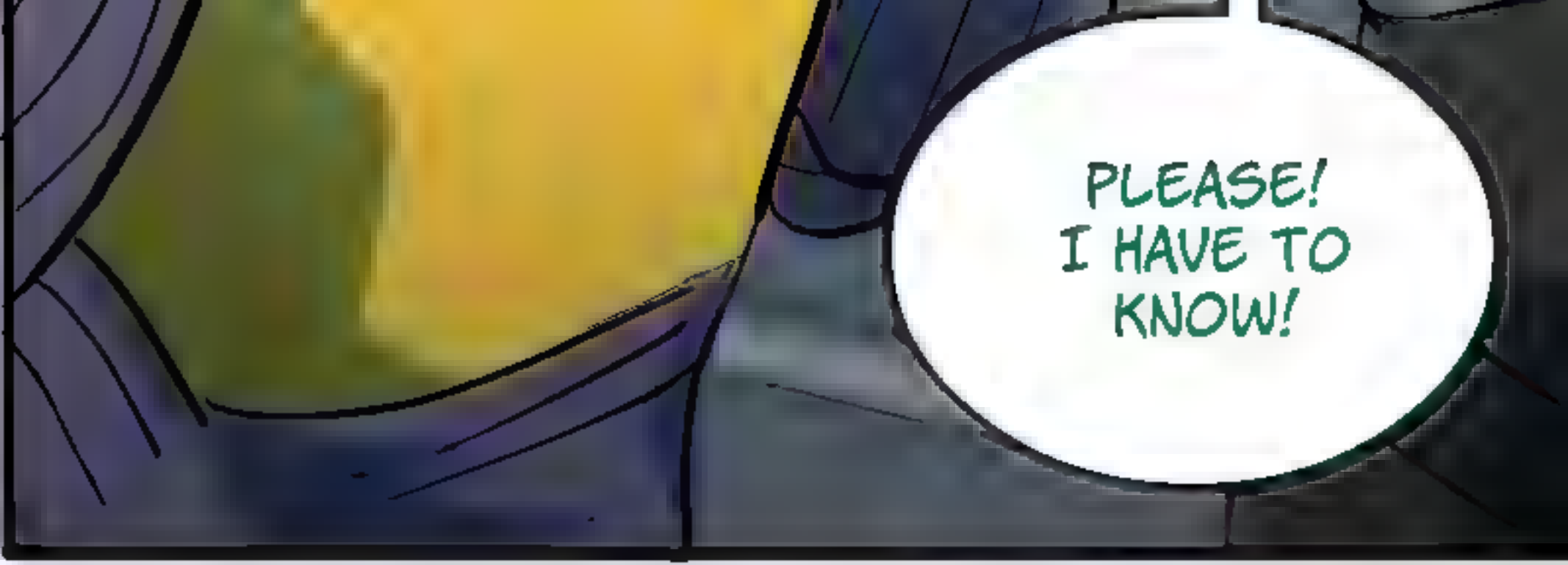
YOU'RE SAYING
YOU USE THE TEMPORAL FORMS OF OBJECTS TO ZIPLINE THROUGH TIME?

...CAN

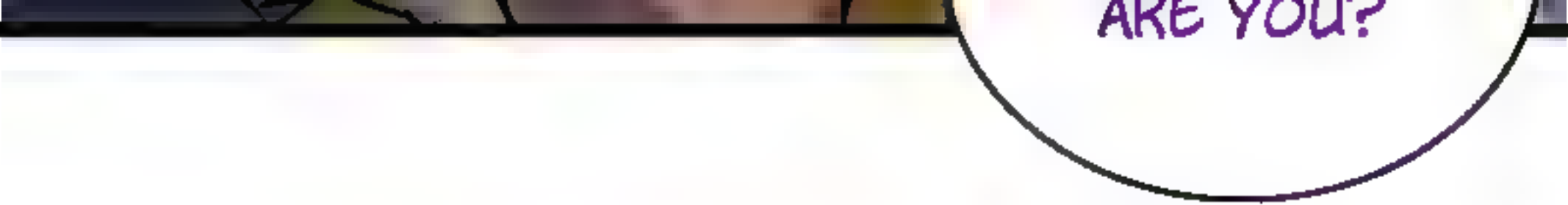
YOU TEACH
ME?

HA!
I DON'T
THINK SO

THINK SO.


PLEASE!
I HAVE TO
KNOW!

...YOU'RE NOT KIDDING,


ARE YOU?

THIS

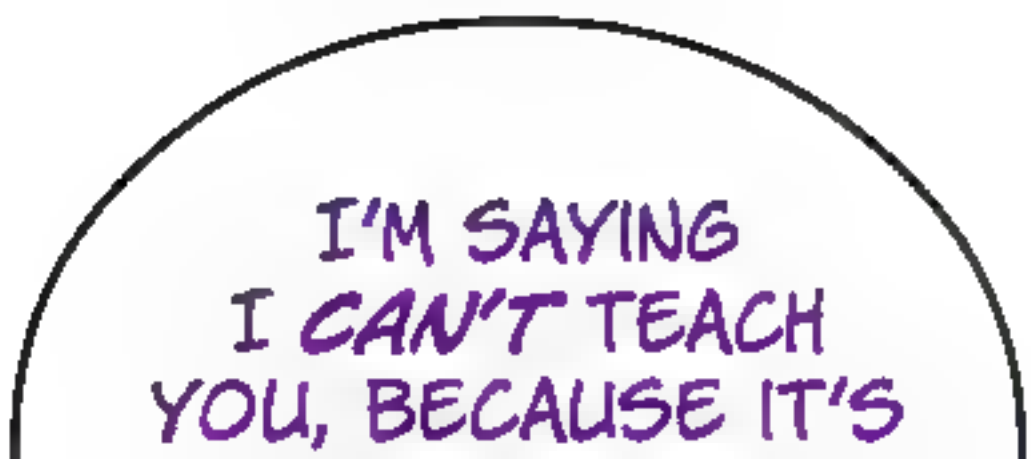
EVERYTHING... I
HAVE TO FIND
KODYA...

SLOW DOWN AND TAKE A SEAT. I THINK

WE NEED TO TALK.

LISTEN,
IT'S NOT THAT
I DON'T WANT TO

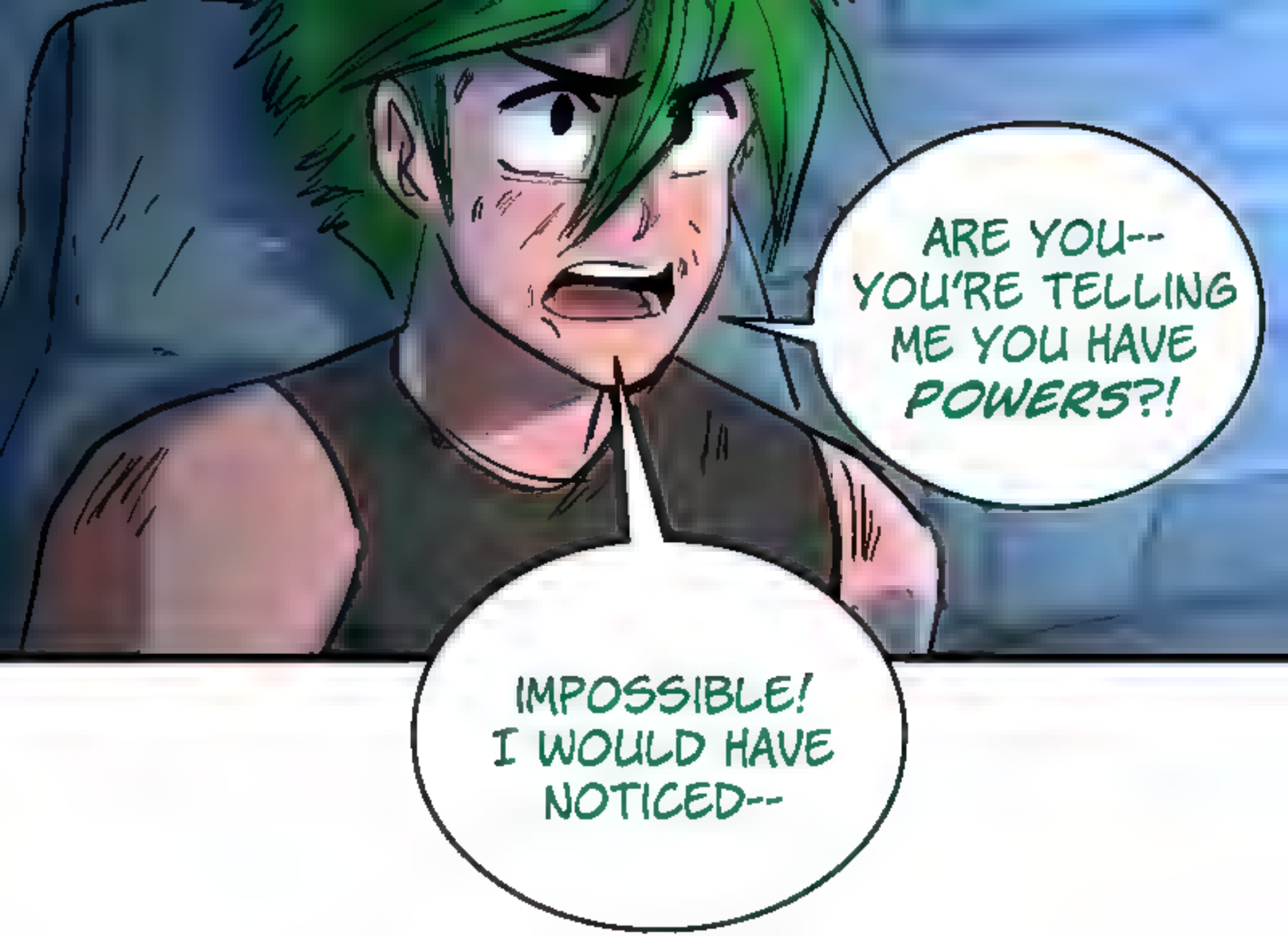
TEACH YOU HOW TO
TIME TRAVEL.

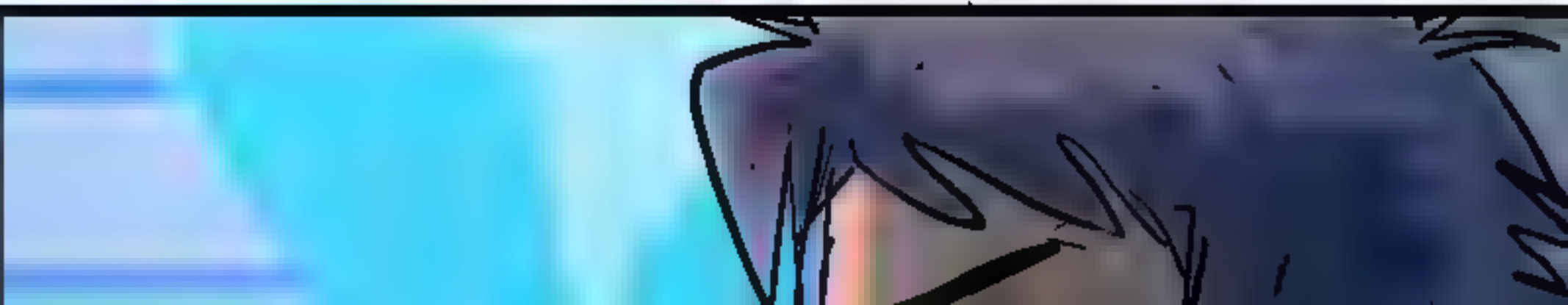

I'M SAYING
I CAN'T TEACH
YOU, BECAUSE IT'S

AN ABILITY YOU HAVE TO BE BORN WITH.

DO YOU
UNDERSTAND

UNDERSTAND
WHAT I'M
SAYING?


ARE YOU-- YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU HAVE POWERS?!
IMPOSSIBLE! I WOULD HAVE NOTICED--



YOU DON'T

REMEMBER, DO
YOU? HOW
WE MET?

YOU RECRUITED ME FOR A RESEARCH POSITION IN YOUR SPACE CREW, BUT WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH...?

WAIT... I REMEMBER THINKING YOU HAD IMPOSSIBLY GOOD TIMING WHEN WE'D RUN INTO TROUBLE ON OUR MISSIONS... AND YOU WERE INEXPLICABLY PREPARED FOR THE MOST BIZARRE SITUATIONS...

I
ASSUMED IT WAS
BECAUSE YOU WERE

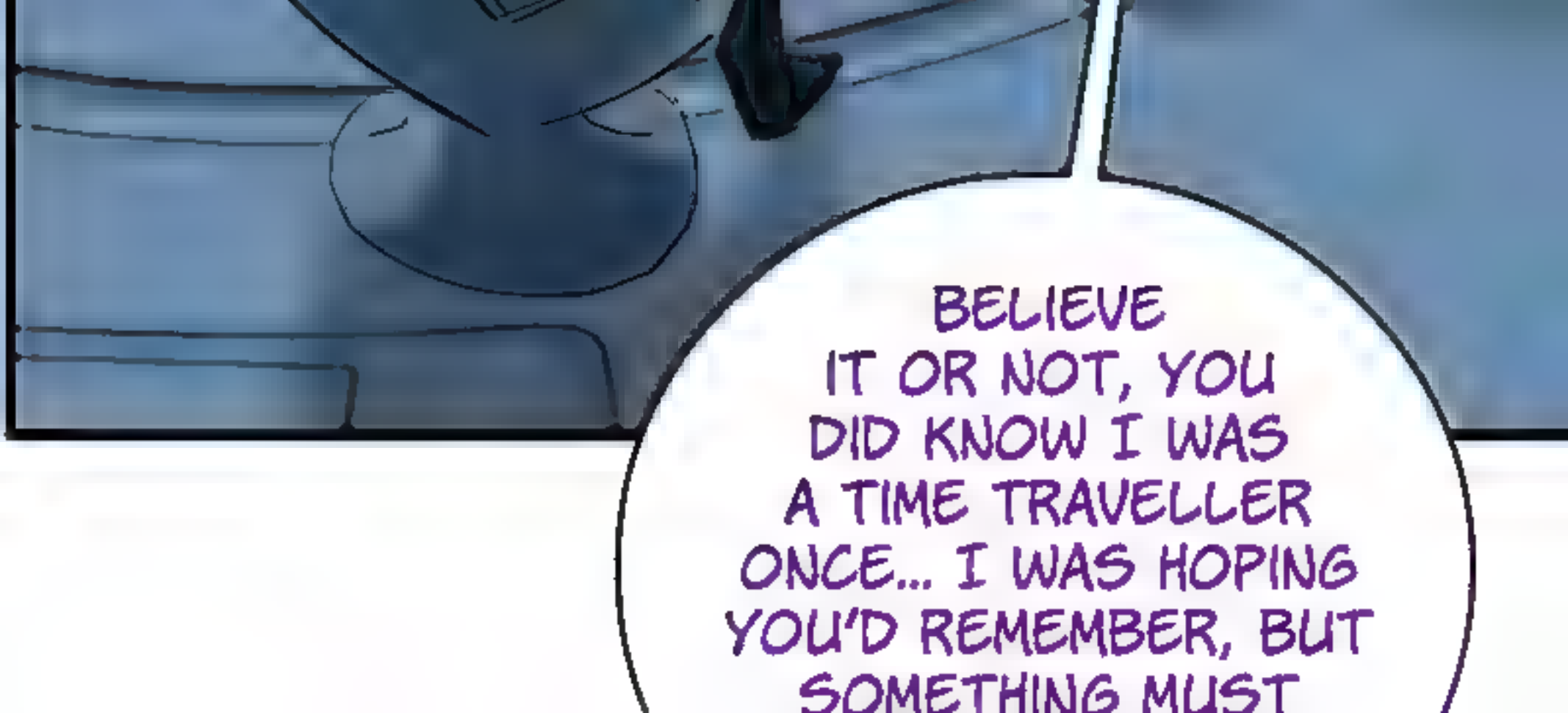
SUCH A SKILLED LEADER. BUT IT WAS TIME TRAVEL ALL ALONG, WASN'T IT?

I LIKE
TO THINK I'M
A PRETTY GOOD
LEADER TOO, BUT

BOTHER YOU, BUT YOU'RE RIGHT... TIME TRAVEL HELPS.

THANKFULLY, IT'S A DISCREET POWER, SO PEOPLE

POWER, SO PEOPLE
DON'T USUALLY
NOTICE.


BELIEVE IT OR NOT, YOU DID KNOW I WAS A TIME TRAVELLER ONCE... I WAS HOPING YOU'D REMEMBER, BUT SOMETHING MUST

HAVE GONE WRONG.

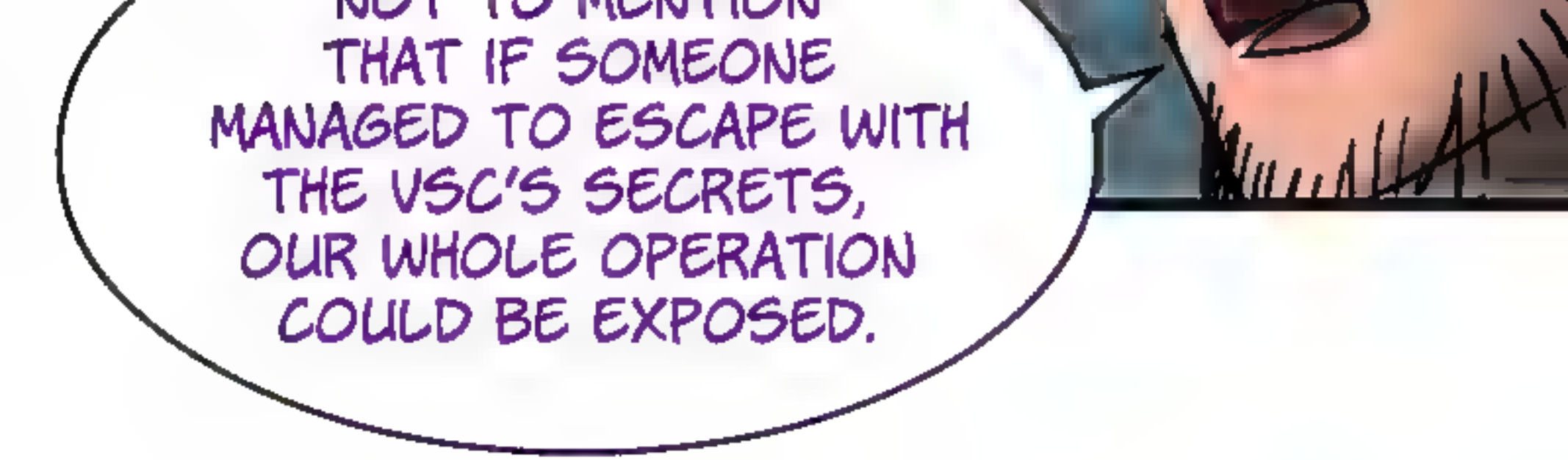
YOU WERE PROBABLY RESET TO THE MOMENT BEFORE YOU LEARNED THE TRUE NATURE OF THE VSC... IT'S ONE OF THE SECURITY FEATURES OF THE ROOM OF SWORDS.

WHAT?!
HOW DO YOU
KNOW THAT?!

BECAUSE
THE ROOM OF SWORDS
WAS DESIGNED TO HOLD

THE MOST DANGEROUS ENTITIES THAT THE VSC HAS EVER DEALT WITH.

IT'S EASIER
TO CONTAIN THEM
IF THEY DON'T REMEMBER
HOW THEY GOT THERE.

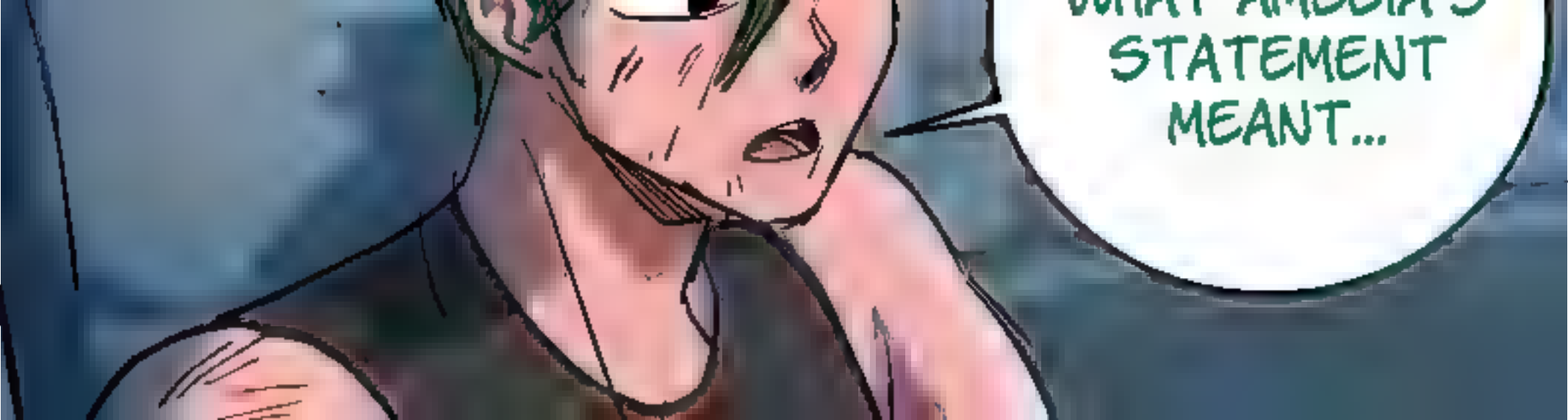

NOT TO MENTION
THAT IF SOMEONE
MANAGED TO ESCAPE WITH
THE VSC'S SECRETS,
OUR WHOLE OPERATION
COULD BE EXPOSED.

I THOUGHT
THE VSC WAS JUST
A RESEARCH FOUNDATION

THAT FUNDED SPACE EXPLORATION!

THAT'S THEIR PUBLIC IMAGE, BUT IN REALITY, THE VSC IS A LOT MORE THAN THAT.

IT'S A SECRET ORGANIZATION THAT PROTECTS OUR UNIVERSE FROM REALITY-BREAKING THREATS.


WHAT AMBER'S STATEMENT MEANT...

HUH?
WHO'S
AMELIA?

SHE WAS THE FOUNDER OF THE VSC!
I CAME ACROSS HER FILE WHEN I WAS TRYING TO CALL FOR HELP.

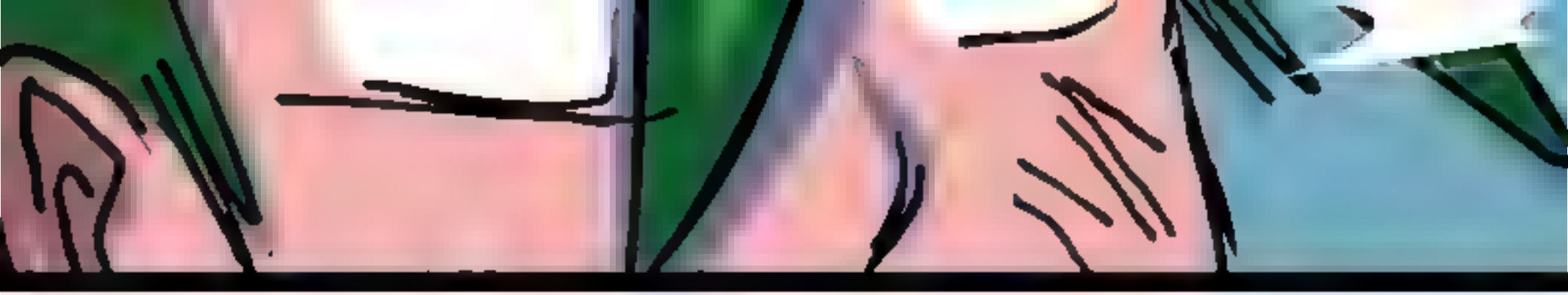
THAT
MUST BE A

MISTAKE... I KNEW THE FOUNDER PERSONALLY. IN FACT, HE LEFT ME IN CHARGE UNTIL *YOU* RETURNED.

WITH IT?

BECAUSE
IT WAS

YOU.



IN YOUR
FUTURE, YOU
BECAME A VISIONARY

LEADER!

YOU SAW THAT THAT REALITY AS WE KNOW IT IS ONLY A FRAGILE SET OF RULES PROPPING UP ALL OF EXISTENCE.

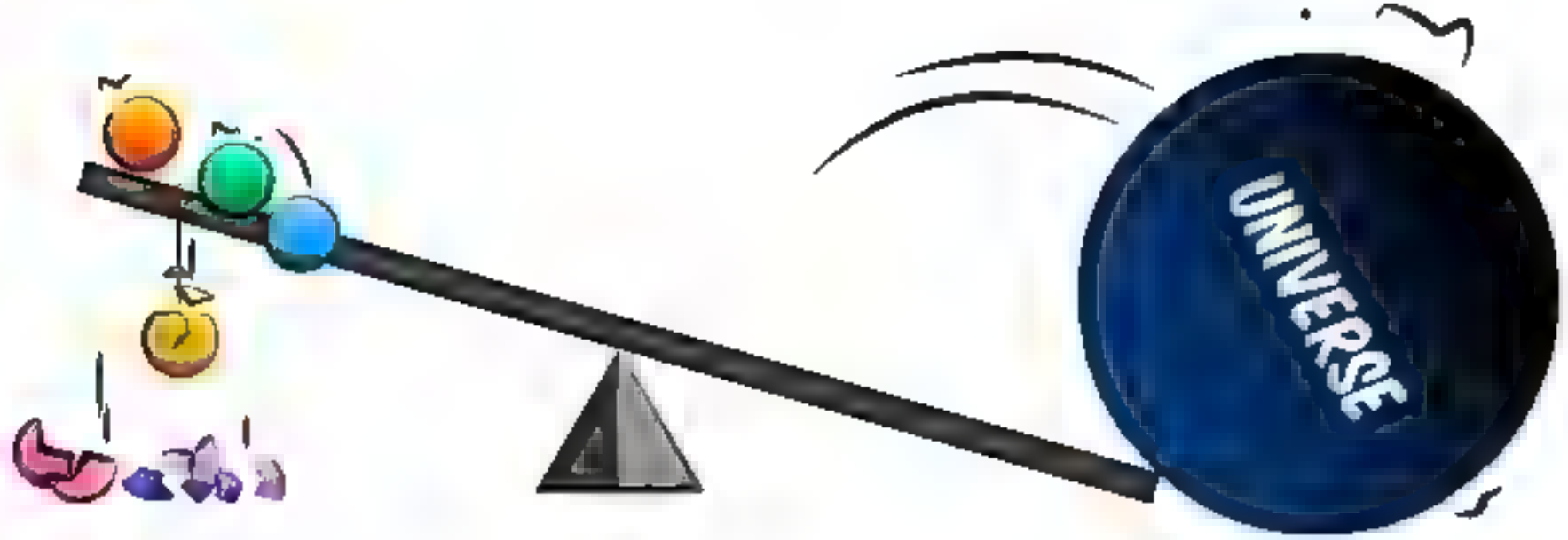
UNIVERSE

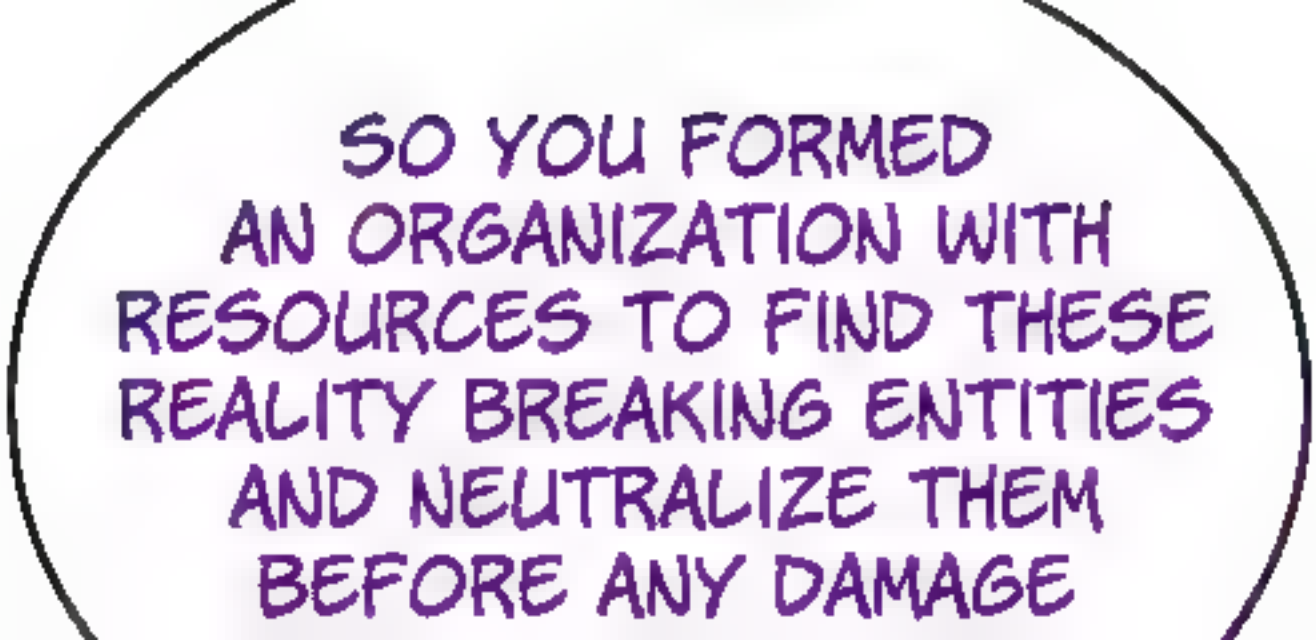
LAWS OF REALITY

AND THE MORE OFTEN THOSE RULES ARE BROKEN, THE WEAKER REALITY

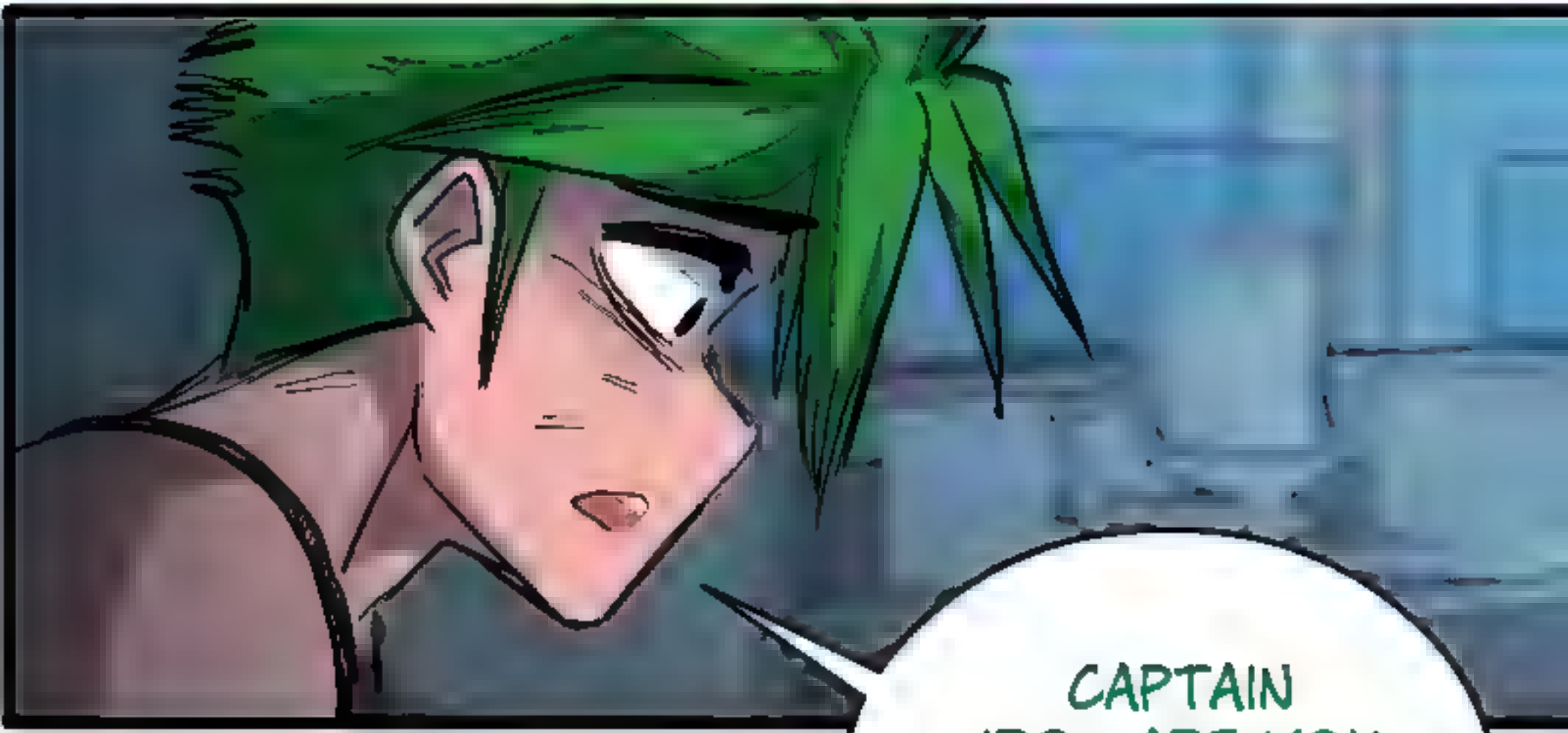
BECOMES.

LAWS OF REALITY




SO YOU FORMED
AN ORGANIZATION WITH
RESOURCES TO FIND THESE
REALITY BREAKING ENTITIES
AND NEUTRALIZE THEM
BEFORE ANY DAMAGE

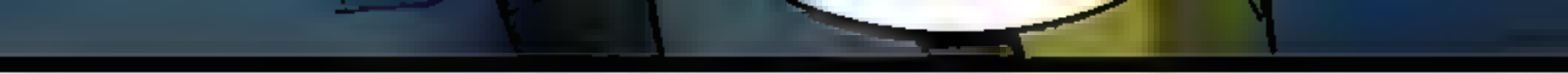
IS DONE.



MASIOSARE?

THAT WAS THE NAME GIVEN TO YOU BY THE COCKROACH KING.

SO YOU DO REMEMBER?!

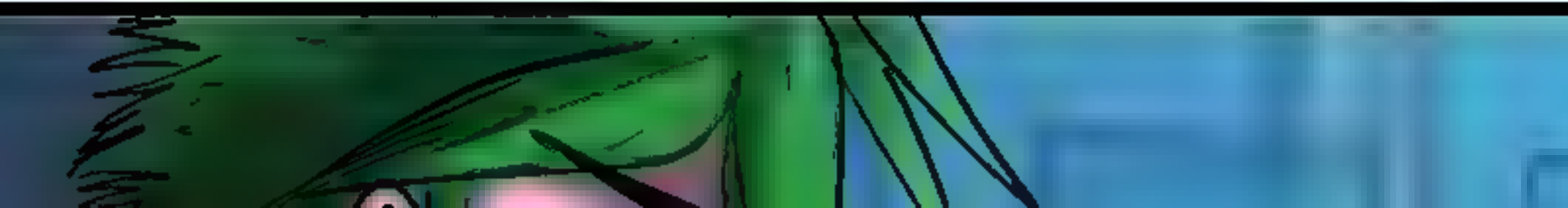


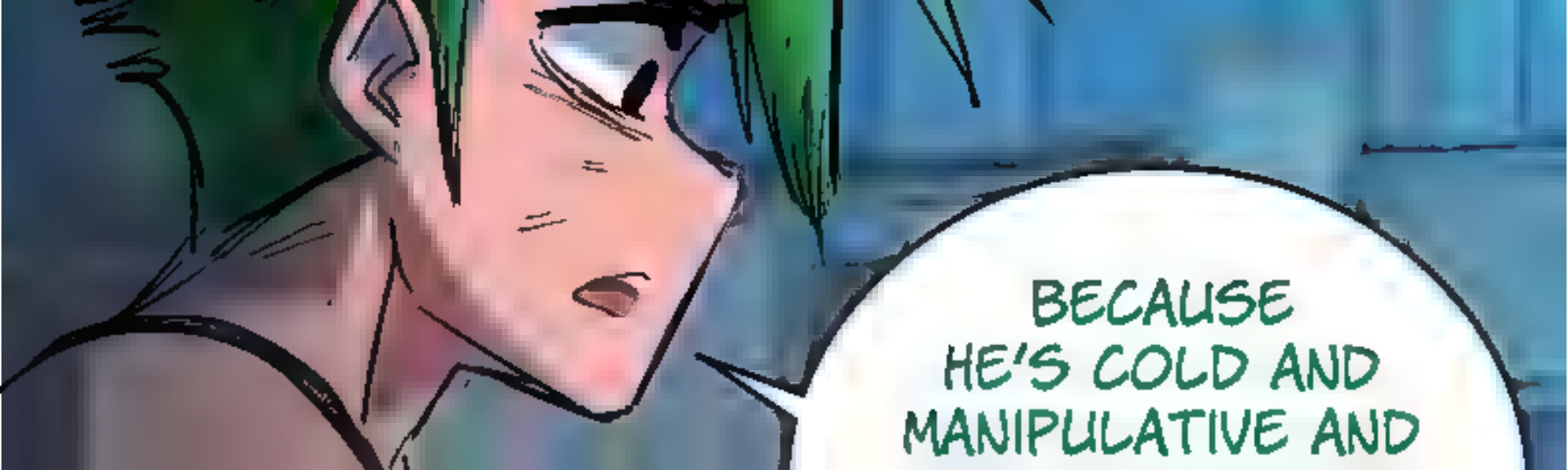
...NO.

I DON'T HAVE ANY OF HIS MEMORIES. BUT I KNOW WHO HE IS.

AND I
NEVER WANT
TO BECOME
HIM.

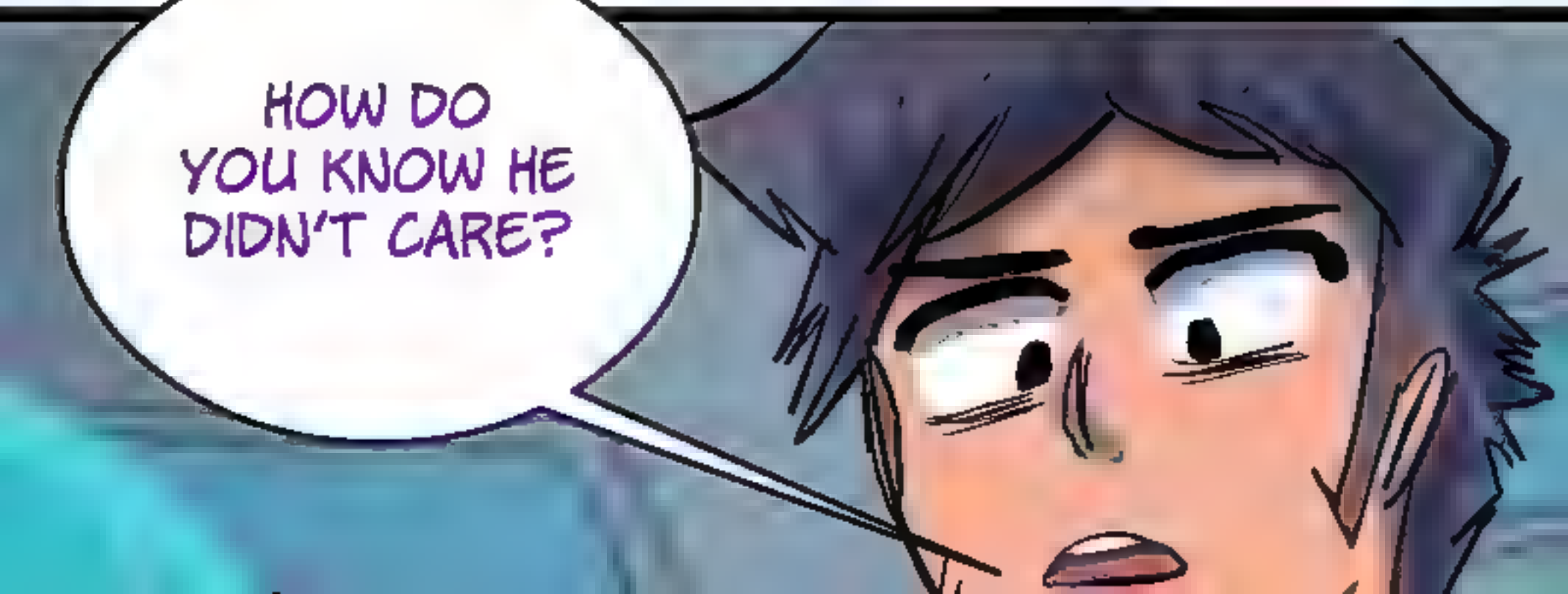
WHAT?
WHY NOT?



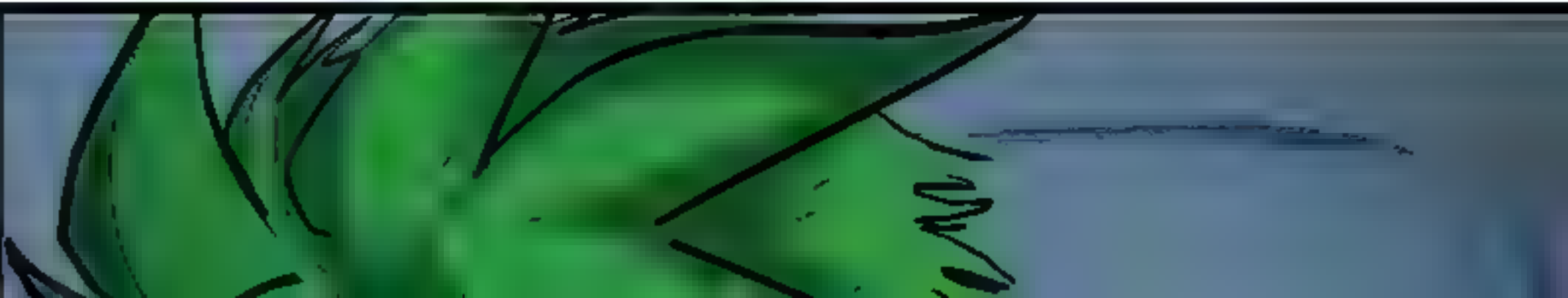

BECAUSE HE'S COLD AND MANIPULATIVE AND

DOESN'T CARE WHO HE HURTS TO ACCOMPLISH HIS GOALS.

HOW DO YOU KNOW HE DIDN'T CARE?



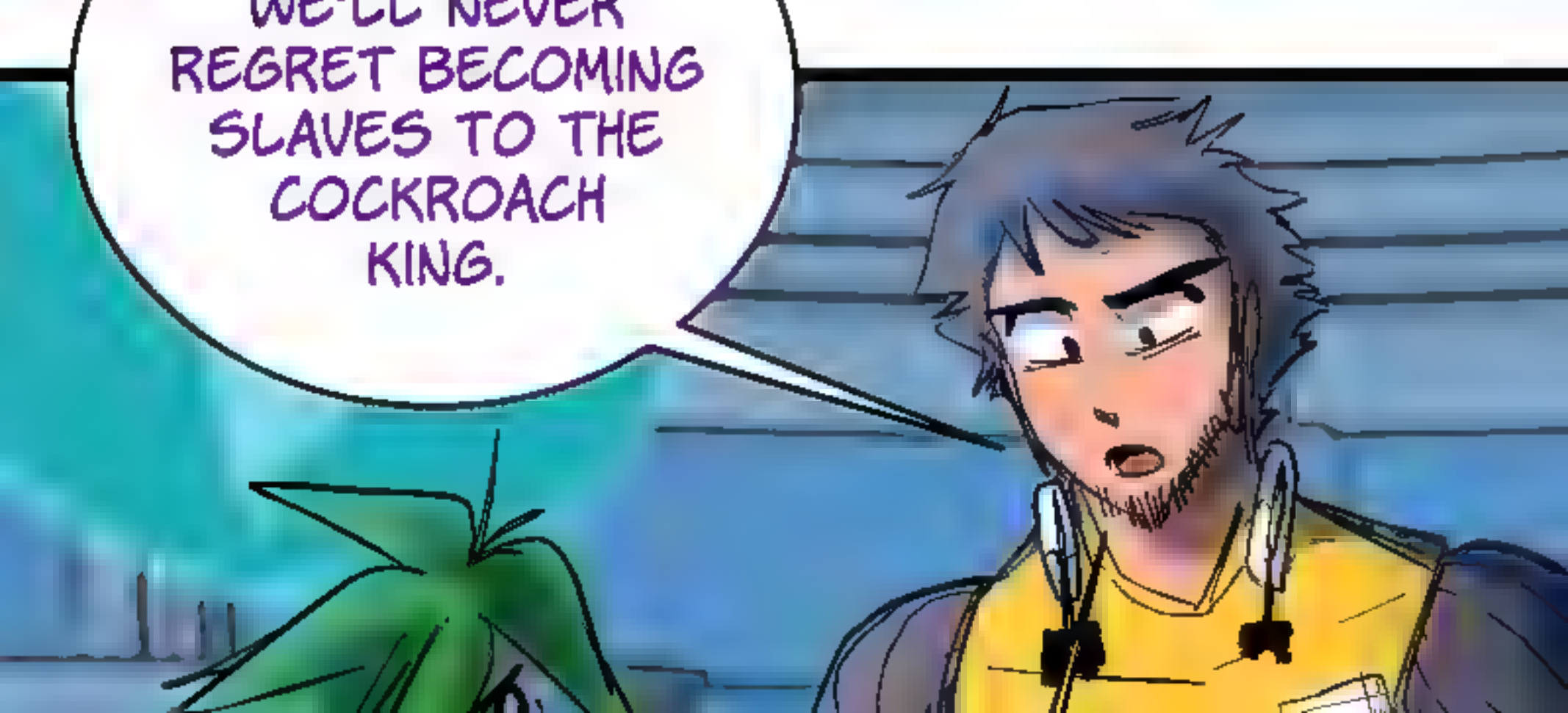
SOMETIMES WE HAVE TO DO THINGS WE DON'T WANT TO FOR THE GREATER GOOD.



THAT'S

SOME OF
MY BIGGEST
REGRETS ARE THINGS
I DID WHILE BELIEVING
THEY WERE FOR THE
GREATER GOOD.

AT LEAST


WE'LL NEVER REGRET BECOMING SLAVES TO THE COCKROACH KING.

THANKS TO "MASIOSARE", HE'S GONE FOR GOOD.

...BUT

DON ECAPED
THE ROOM OF
SWORDS.

HE
WHAT?!
ARE YOU
SURE?!

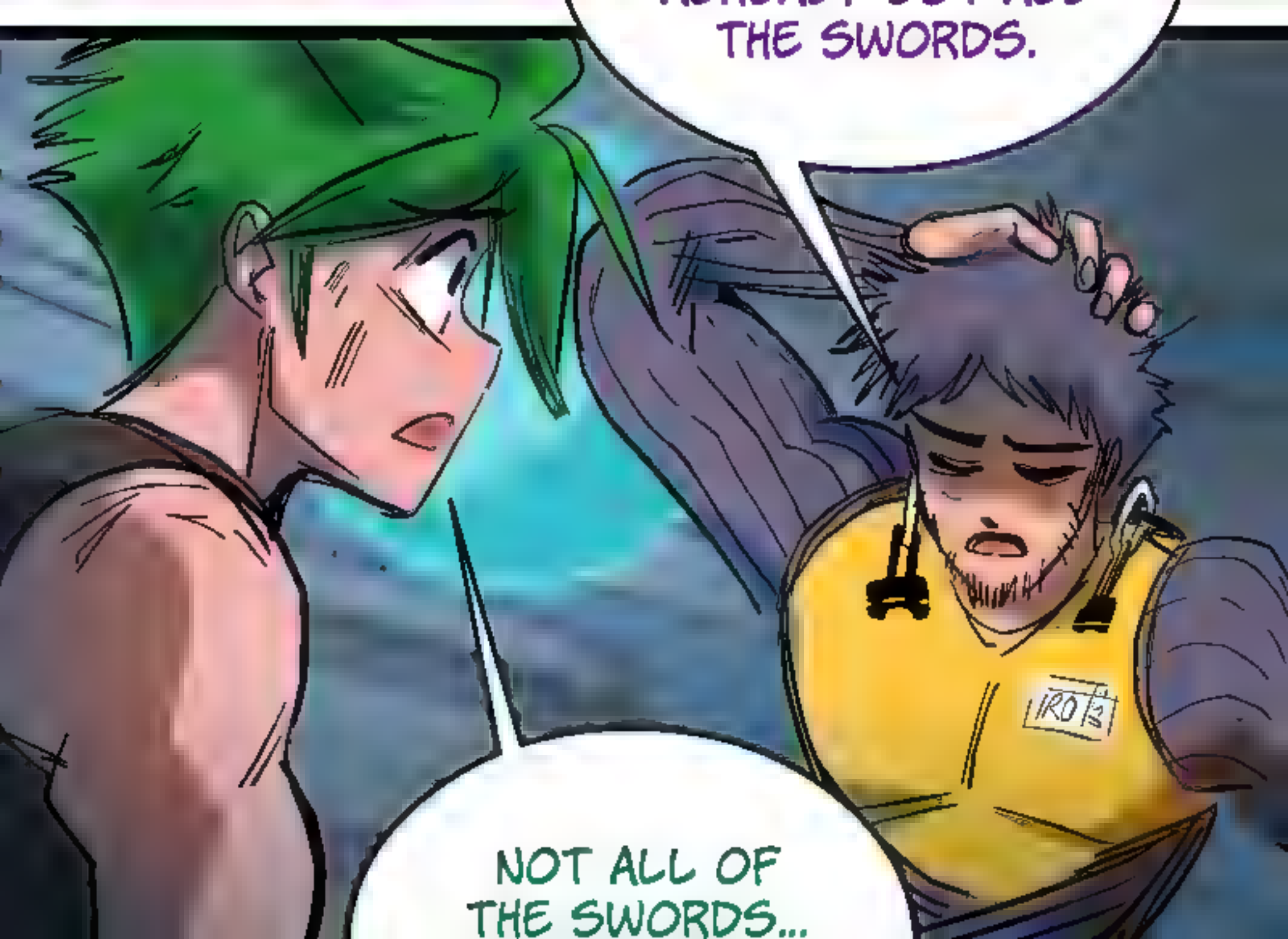
I DON'T

KNOW... MAYBE.
WE LEFT THE ROOM
OF SWORDS TOGETHER.
DON STOLE THE SWORDS
AND TRIED TO KILL ME,
BUT SOMEONE ATTACKED
HIM AND I DON'T KNOW
IF HE MADE IT
OUT.

OH, HE'LL
BE BACK... HE
EARNED THE NAME

COCKROACH KING FOR A REASON. HE SURVIVES.

AND WHEN HE DOES, WE'RE SCREWED IF HE'S ALREADY GOT ALL


THE SWORDS.
IRO
NOT ALL OF
THE SWORDS...

9 OF THEM ARE
STILL SAFE!

...Я, НИН?

THEN DON'S ONLY RECOVERED ABOUT 60% OF HIS POWER.
THAT GIVES US A SHOT. WE'LL USE THOSE 9 SWORDS AS BAIT AND THEN YOU'LL TAKE DON BACK TO THE ROOM OF

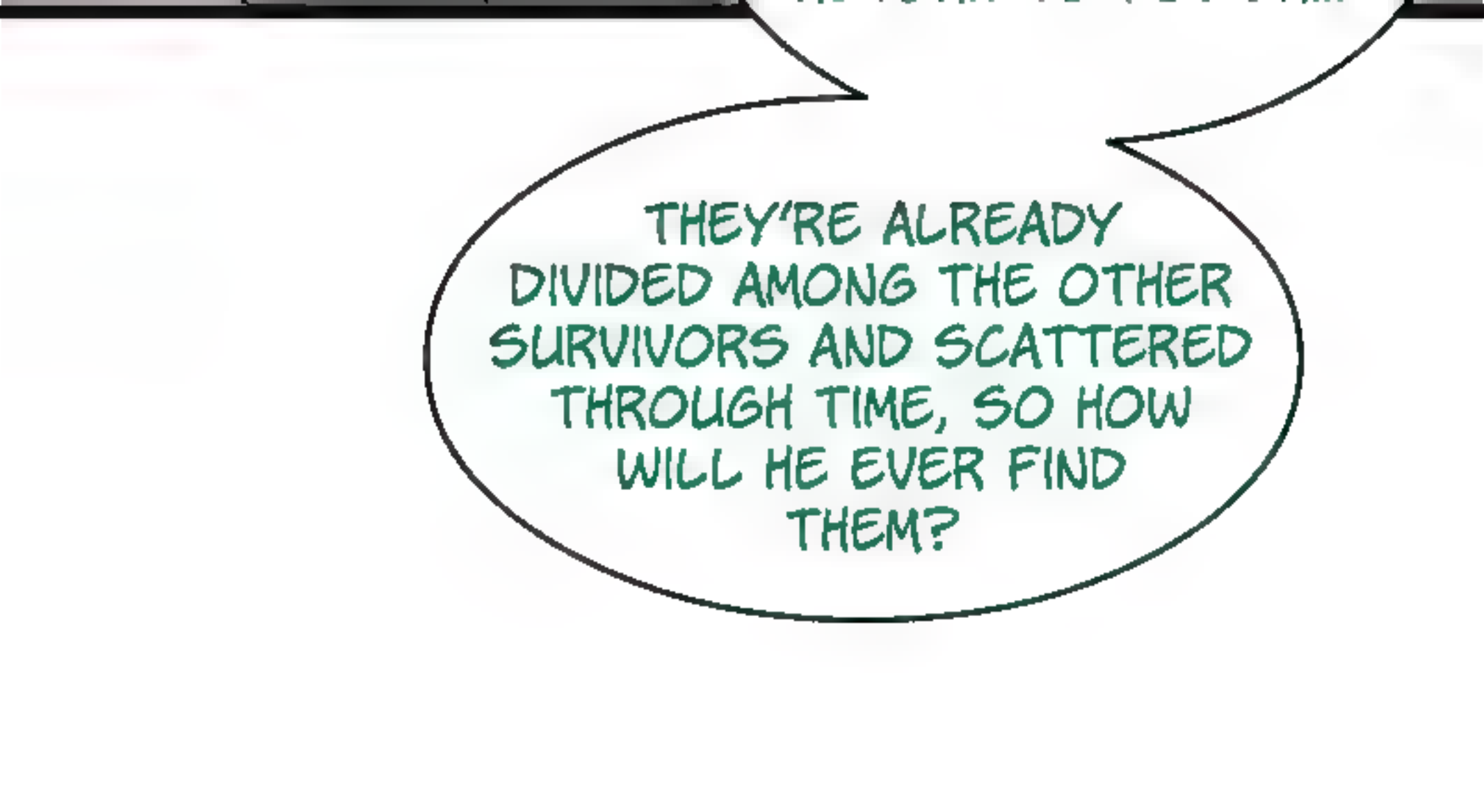
SWORDS.

TAKE HIM-- WHAT?! YOU WANT ME TO GO IN THERE AGAIN?!

YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WITH THE POWER TO SEND THINGS TO AND FROM THE ROOM OF SWORDS DIMENSION.

THERE HAS TO BE ANOTHER WAY...

MAYBE
WE CAN JUST
HIDE THE SWORDS SO
THAT DON CAN NEVER
RETURN TO POWER...

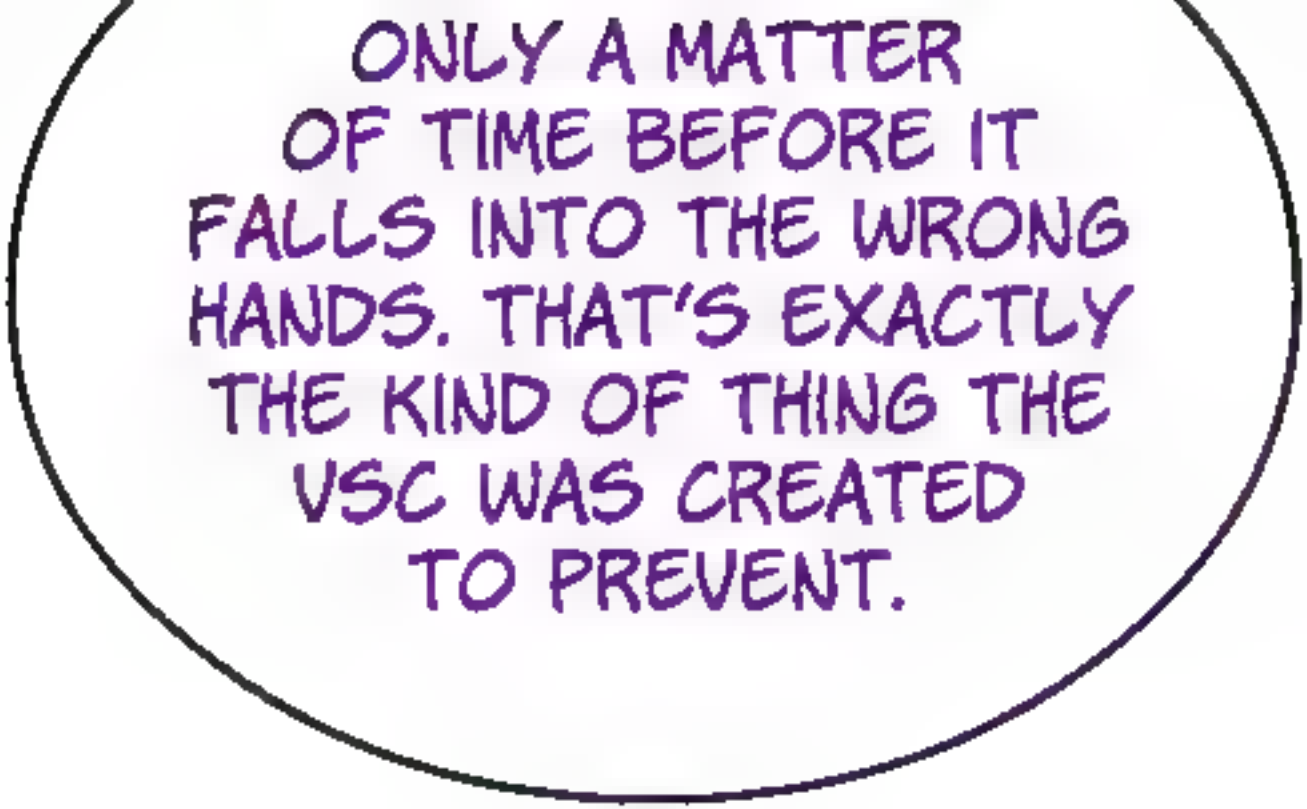

THEY'RE ALREADY DIVIDED AMONG THE OTHER SURVIVORS AND SCATTERED THROUGH TIME, SO HOW WILL HE EVER FIND THEM?

IT'S NOT
ONLY DON WE

HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IF WE LEAVE THEM LAYING AROUND.

THE REALITY-
-BREAKING PROPERTIES
OF THOSE SWORDS ARE
SO CONCENTRATED, THEY
CAN PASS DANGEROUS
ABILITIES TO ANYONE
WHO TOUCHES
THEM.

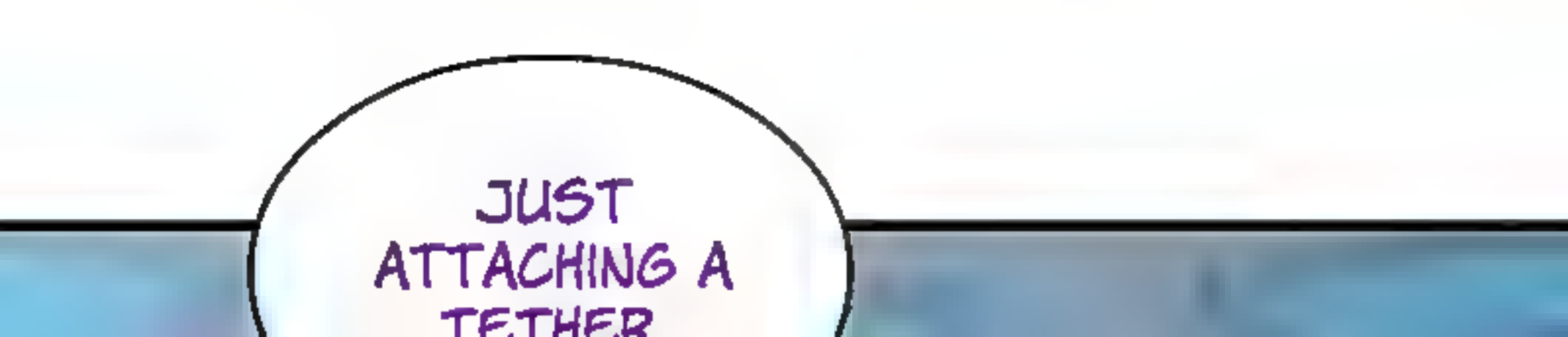
IT'S


ONLY A MATTER
OF TIME BEFORE IT
FALLS INTO THE WRONG
HANDS. THAT'S EXACTLY
THE KIND OF THING THE
VSC WAS CREATED
TO PREVENT.

ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, WE'VE GOT TO GET THOSE SWORDS.
SNAP

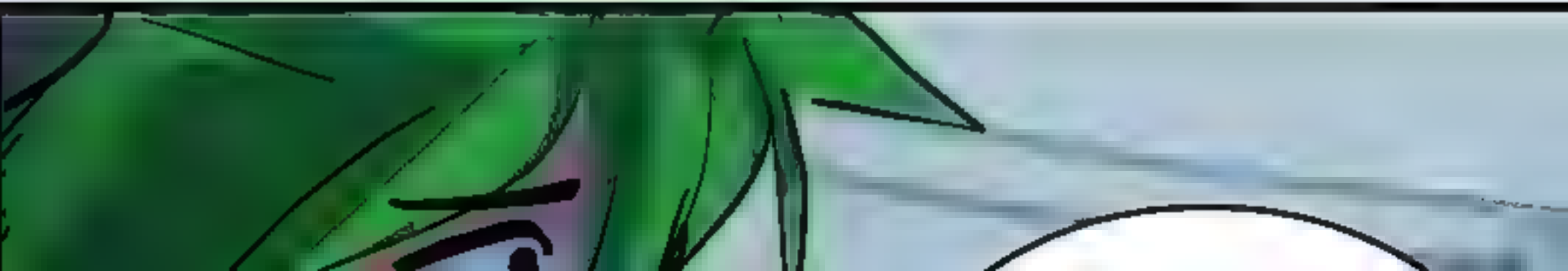
WHAT
ARE YOU

DOING?!


JUST
ATTACHING A

IT'S
AN ADDED
SAFETY MEASURE
TO MAKE SURE WE
STAY TOGETHER

DURING THE TRIP.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN WHEN WE FIND THEM?

WE'RE JUST GOING TO GET THE SWORDS AND GET OUT.

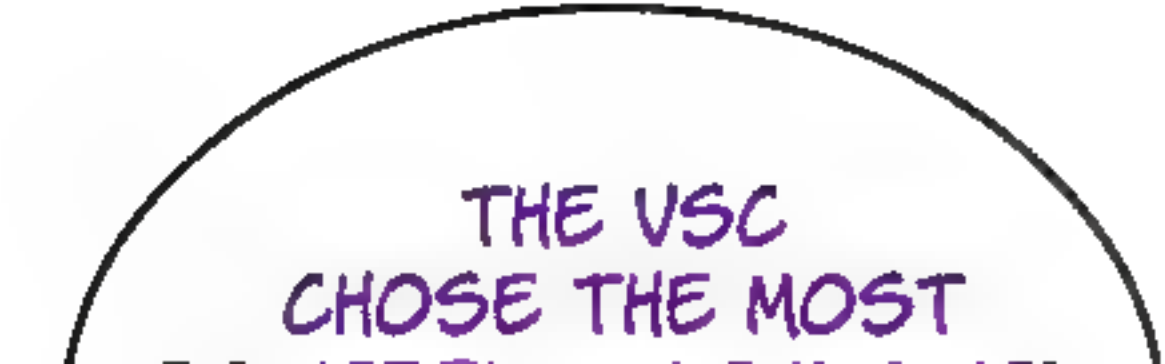
IRON

I MEAN
THE SURVIVORS...
THEY ESCAPED THE
ROOM OF SWORDS, DOESN'T
THAT MAKE THEM FUGITIVES?
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO
ARREST THEM,
ARE YOU?

YOU'VE
GOT THE WRONG

IDEA, THOSE PEOPLE
WEREN'T PRISONERS, THEY
WERE VSC SOLDIERS
HIRED TO CAPTURE
DON.

WHAT?
SOLDIERS?


THE VSC
CHOSE THE MOST

POWERFULLY ENDOWED
REALITY-BREAKERS
THAT HISTORY HAD
TO OFFER.

THEY WERE GRANTED IMMUNITY AND A REWARD OF THEIR CHOOSING IN EXCHANGE FOR THE RISK THEY WERE

TAKING.

SO MUCH FOR IMMUNITY IF THEY ALL ENDED UP BEING TRAPPED IN THE ROOM OF

SWORDS.
...GOOD POINT.

WE CAN
MAKE IT UP
TO THEM WHEN

THEM.
PLUCK

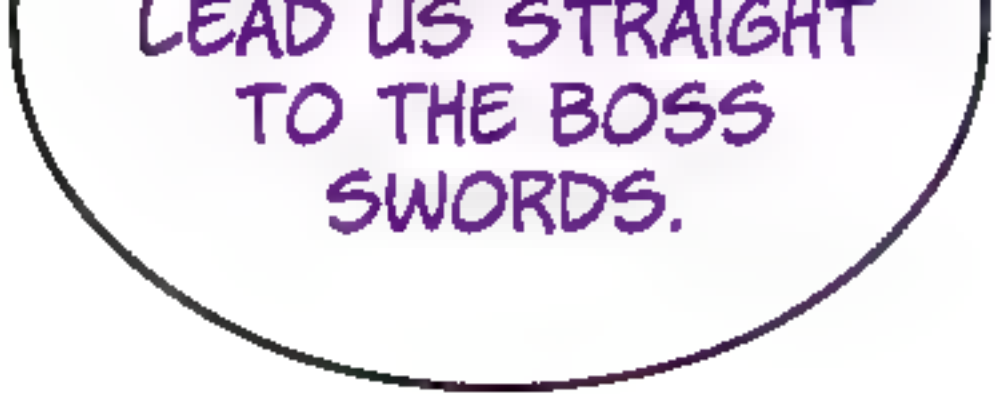
WHAT

WAS THAT FOR?

"MASIOSARE"
MADE THE BOSS
SWORDS OUT
OF HIS OWN

ESSENCE...

WHICH MEANS
YOUR 4D ROPE WILL


LEAD US STRAIGHT
TO THE BOSS
SWORDS.

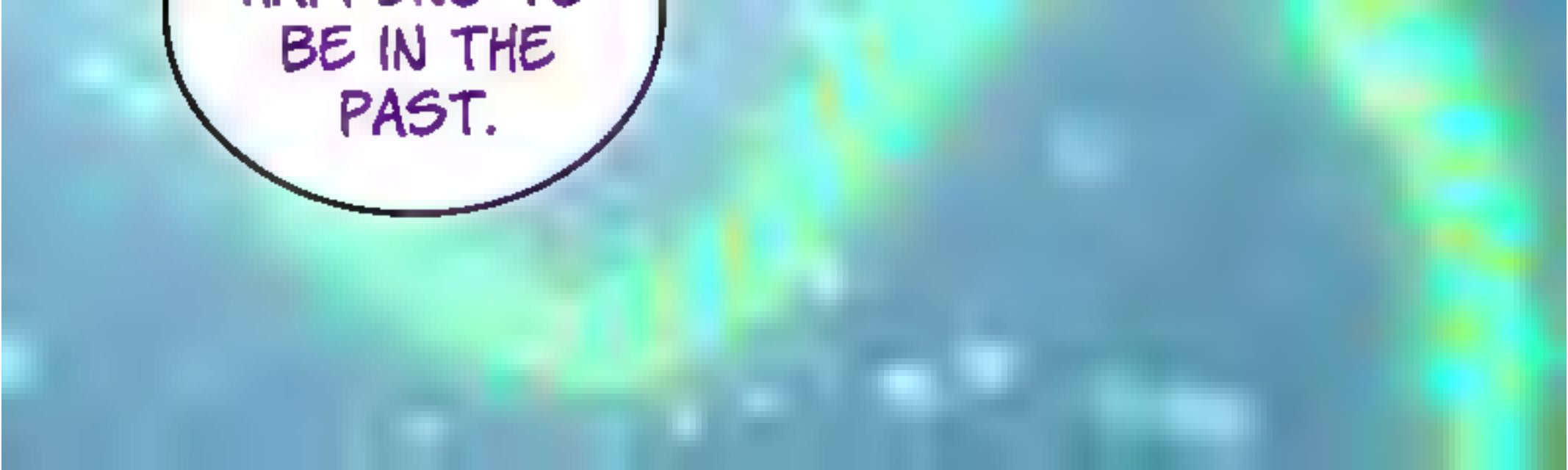
IT
WON'T BE MY
FUTURE.

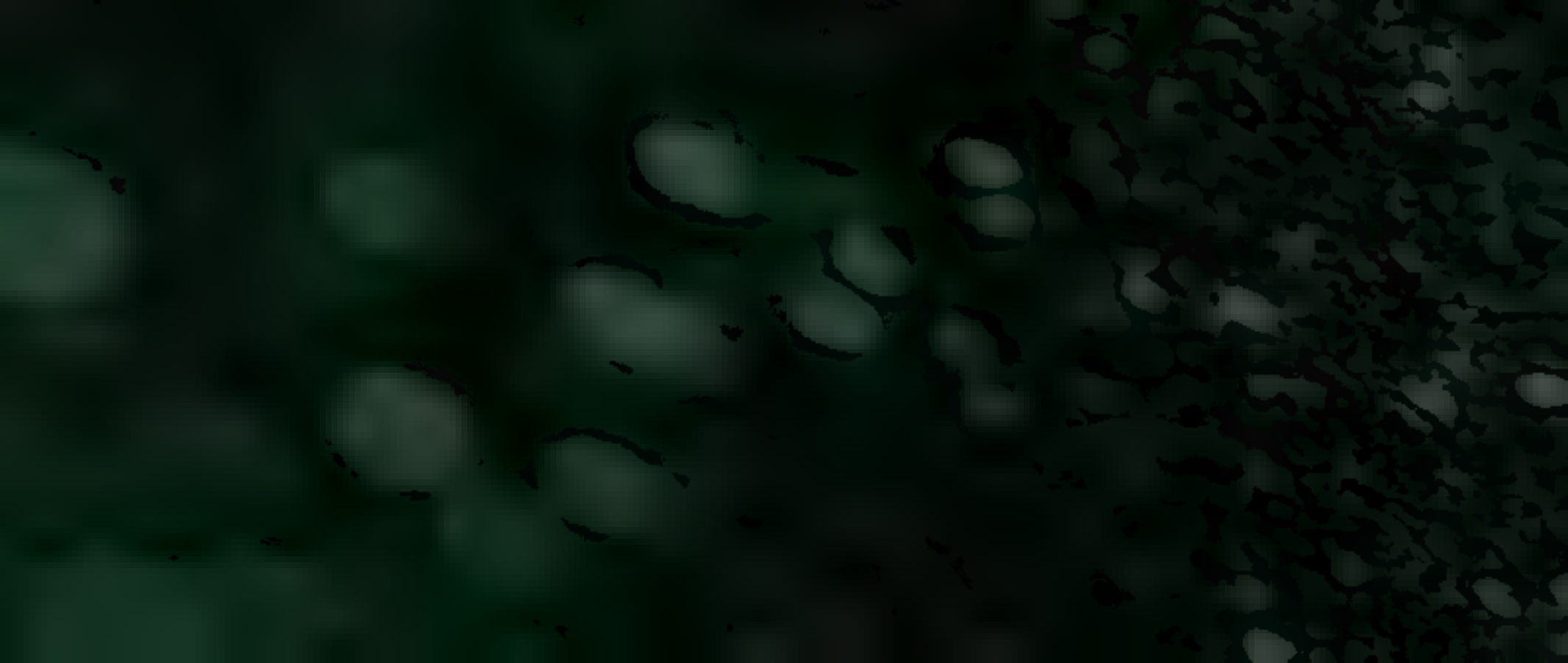
I'M
GOING TO
FIND ANOTHER
WAY.

YOU JUST MIGHT, CADET.

BUT FOR NOW, LET'S FOCUS ON THE PRESENT.

WHICH
HAPPENS TO


BE IN THE
PAST.



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